CLAIMS

We claim:

1.   A method for providing personalized coupons to a customer at the beginning

of the customer's shopping process, the method comprising the steps of:

5   obtaining a current shopping list from a wireless communication device of the

customer;

correlating the current shopping list with an available coupon list to identify

personalized coupons for the customer; and

providing the personalized coupons to the customer at the beginning of the

10   customer's shopping process.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the correlating step includes:

comparing items identified in the current shopping list with the available

coupon list; and

designating coupons directly relevant for said items as the personalized

15   coupons if the comparison results indicate at least one match.

3.   The method of claim 2, further comprising:

designating coupons related to said items as the personalized coupons if the

comparison results indicate no match.

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4.   The method of claim 1, wherein the wireless communication device is a

personal digital assistant, a mobile phone, or a two-way pager carried by the

customer.

5.   The method of claim 1, wherein, in the obtaining step, the current shopping

list is obtained from the customer's wireless communication device using Bluetooth

techniques or infrared communication techniques.

6.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining customer information from the wireless communication device;

obtaining previous purchase records of the customer based on the customer

information.

7.   The method of claim 6, wherein the correlating step correlates the current

shopping list and the previous purchase records with the available coupon list to

identify the personalized coupons.

8.   The method of claim 6, further comprising:

pre-storing purchase records of a plurality of customers using Point-of-Sale

(POS) terminals.

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9.   A system for providing personalized coupons to a customer at the beginning

of the customer's shopping process, the system comprising:

an interface for obtaining a current shopping list from a wireless

communication device of the customer;

5   a correlation module for correlating the current shopping list with an available

coupon list to identify personalized coupons for the customer; and

a coupon generator for generating the personalized coupons to the customer

at the beginning of the customer's shopping process.

10.   The system of claim 9, wherein the correlation module compares items

10   identified in the current shopping list with the available coupon list, and designates

coupons directly relevant for said items as the personalized coupons if the

comparison results indicate at least one match.

11.   The system of claim 10, wherein the correlation module designates coupons

related to said items as the personalized coupons if the comparison results indicate

15   no match.

12.   The system of claim 9, wherein the wireless communication device is a personal digital assistant, a mobile phone, or a two-way pager carried by the customer.

13.   The system of claim 9, wherein the current shopping list is obtained from the customer's wireless communication device using Bluetooth techniques or infrared communication techniques.

14.   The system of claim 9, further comprising:

a first database for storing the available coupon list; and

a second database for storing purchase records of a plurality of shoppers in the system.

15.   The system of claim 14, wherein the interface further obtains customer information from the wireless communication device of the customer, and the correlation module obtains, from the second database, previous purchase records of the customer based on the obtained customer information.

16.   The system of claim 15, wherein the correlation module correlates the current shopping list and the obtained customer's previous purchase records with the available coupon list to identify the personalized coupons.

17.   The system of claim 14, wherein the interface and the coupon generator are located at a front location of a store.

18.   The system of claim 18, wherein at least one of the correlation module, the first database and the second database is located remote from said front location of the store.

19.   A computer program product embodied on computer readable media readable by a computing system in a computing environment, for providing personalized coupons to a customer at the beginning of the customer's shopping process, the computer program product comprising:

first computer-readable program code means for obtaining a current shopping list from a wireless communication device of the customer;

second computer-readable program code means for correlating the current shopping list with an available coupon list to identify personalized coupons for the customer; and

third computer-readable program code means for providing the personalized

coupons to the customer at the beginning of the customer's shopping process.

20.　The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the second computer-

readable program code means compares items identified in the current shopping list

5　　with the available coupon list, and designates coupons directly relevant for said

items as the personalized coupons if the comparison results indicate at least one

match.

21.　The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the second computer-

readable program code means designates coupons related to said items as the

10　　personalized coupons if the comparison results indicate no match.

22.　The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the wireless

communication device is a personal digital assistant, a mobile phone, or a two-way

pager carried by the customer.

23.　The computer program product of claim 19, wherein the first computer-

15　　readable program code means obtains the current shopping list from the customer's

wireless communication device using Bluetooth techniques or infrared

communication techniques.

24.   The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising:

fourth computer-readable program code means for obtaining customer

5   information from the wireless communication device;

fifth computer-readable program code means for obtaining previous purchase

records of the customer based on the customer information.

25.   The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the second computer-

readable program code means correlates the current shopping list and the previous

10   purchase records of the customer with the available coupons to identify the

personalized coupons.